

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6068

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION NATO

UNCLAS THE HAGUE 2913

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, NATO, NL

SUBJECT: PUBLIC OPINION POLL SHOWS DUTCH STRONGLY IN
FAVOR OF CONTINUED MEMBERSHIP IN NATO

REF: THE HAGUE 1907

1. THE NETHERLANDS INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC OPINION (NIPO),
A RESPECTED AND GENERALLY ACCURATE LOCAL POLLING ORGANI-
ZATION, HAS PUBLISHED THE RESULTS OF A POLL TAKEN AT
THE END OF APRIL ON DUTCH MEMBERSHIP IN NATO. OVER A
THOUSAND DUTCH VOTERS WERE ASKED IF THEY THOUGHT:
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A) HOLLAND SHOULD REMAIN IN NATO; B) HOLLAND SHOULD

WITHDRAW FROM NATO; OR C) HOLLAND SHOULD CONTINUE IN NATO CONDITIONALLY BUT WITHDRAW IF CONDITIONS WERE NOT MET WITHIN THREE YEARS.

2. CONDITIONAL MEMBERSHIP REFERS TO RESOLUTION PASSED BY LABOR PARTY CONGRESS ON PEACE AND SECURITY (REFTEL) IN MID-APRIL WHICH CALLED FOR WITHDRAWAL FROM NATO THREE YEARS FROM NOW UNLESS DEFINITE PROGRESS TOWARDS DETENTE HAD BEEN MADE BY THAT DATE.

3. THE POLL WAS DESIGNED TO INCLUDE, PROPORTIONATELY, THE SIX LARGEST DUTCH POLITICAL PARTIES (RADICAL, LABOR, LIBERAL AND THREE LARGEST CONFESSIONALS). THE OVERALL RESPONSE WAS: FIFTY-EIGHT PERCENT FOR REMAINING IN NATO UNCONDITIONALLY; NINETEEN PERCENT FOR REMAINING CONDITIONALLY; FIVE PERCENT FOR IMMEDIATE WITHDRAWAL; AND EIGHTEEN PERCENT WITH NO OPINION.

4. RESPONDENTS OF ALL PARTIES REPRESENTED IN THE POLL DEMONSTRATED AT LEAST A PLURALITY FOR REMAINING IN NATO UNCONDITIONALLY. THE RADICAL PARTY MEMBERS, WHO WERE LEAST FAVORABLY DISPOSED TO NATO, HAD A PERCENTAGE OF FORTY-SEVEN PERCENT FOR UNCONDITIONAL MEMBERSHIP, THIRTY-THREE PERCENT FOR CONDITIONAL MEMBERSHIP AND ONLY SEVEN PERCENT FOR IMMEDIATE WITHDRAWAL.

5. OF PARTICULAR INTEREST WAS FAVORABLE LABOR PARTY MEMBER RESPONSE IN VIEW OF ANTI-NATO CAST OF LABOR PARTY CONGRESS. FIFTY-SEVEN PERCENT OF LABOR RESPONDENTS WERE FOR UNCONDITIONAL MEMBERSHIP, TWENTY-FIVE PERCENT FOR CONDITIONAL MEMBERSHIP AND SIX PERCENT IN FAVOR OF IMMEDIATE WITHDRAWAL.

6. COMMENT: POLL ADDS SOME CONCRETE EVIDENCE TO THEORY THAT MODERATE LABOR PARTY LEADERS, SUCH AS PRIME MINISTER DEN UYL AND FOREIGN MINISTER VAN DER STOEL, BOTH STAUNCH PUBLIC SUPPORTERS OF NATO, ARE CLOSER TO GRASS ROOTS OF THEIR PARTY THAN PARTY CONGRESS DELEGATES AND, TO LESSER EXTENT, LABOR PARTY PARLIAMENTARIANS.

TANGUY

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